

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of selecting an unraced racehorse candidate having a better than average likelihood of becoming a high earner, said method comprising:
 - (i) ultrasonographically-measuring the width of the ventricular septal wall of said racehorse candidate utilizing an ultrasound machine;
 - (ii) comparing said measurement to a collection of ultrasonographically-obtained measurements from a group of horses, wherein said collection of measurements comprises ventricular septal wall width measurements for at least about 75 horses of about the same age, sex, and weight as said racehorse candidate; and
 - (iii) selecting said racehorse candidate if it has an ultrasonographically-obtained ventricular septal wall width measurement that is greater than the mean ultrasonographically-obtained ventricular septal wall width measurement from said collection of measurements.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if it has a ventricular septal wall width that is in the 75th percentile or higher when compared to the ventricular septal wall width measurements from said collection of measurements.
4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said unraced racehorse is available available for sale at an auction.
5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, the method further comprising the step of ultrasonographically measuring the cross-sectional area of the left ventricle in diastole of said unraced racehorse candidate;

wherein said collection of measurements further comprises ultrasonographically-obtained left ventricle in diastole cross-sectional area measurements for at least about 75 horses of about the same age, sex, and weight as said unraced racehorse candidate.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if it has a ventricular septal wall width and left ventricle in diastole cross sectional area that is greater than the mean ventricular septal wall width and left ventricle in diastole cross-sectional area measurement from said collection of measurements.
7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if it has a ventricular septal wall width and a left ventricle in diastole cross sectional area measurement that is in the 75th percentile or higher when compared to the ventricular septal wall width and left ventricle in diastole cross sectional area measurements from said collection of measurements.
8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said ventricular septal wall is situated between a left ventricle and a right ventricle, said left ventricle having a free wall and at least one moderator band extending between said ventricular septal wall and said free wall, said right ventricle having a free wall having an endocardial edge, said right ventricular free wall terminating at a junction with an interventricular septum, and wherein said ultrasonographically measuring step comprises ultrasonographically measuring, in a left parasternal short-axis view obtained at end diastole, the distance from the endocardial edge of the right ventricular free wall, at the point where the wall meets the interventricular septum, through the interventricular septum, to the point of attachment of the moderator band to the ventricular septal wall in the left ventricle.
9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said ultrasonographically measuring step comprises ultrasonographically obtaining a left

parasternal short axis echocardiogram of the left ventricle of said unraced racehorse candidate.

10. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein said step of ultrasonographically measuring the left ventricle in diastole cross sectional area comprises measuring the circumference of the left ventricular chamber.
11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein said step of ultrasonographically measuring the left ventricle in diastole cross sectional area measurement comprises obtaining a left parasternal short-axis echocardiogram of the left ventricle of said racehorse.
12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, the method further comprising the step of ultrasonographically measuring the cross-sectional area of the left ventricle in systole of said unraced racehorse candidate;
wherein said collection of measurements further comprises ultrasonographically-obtained left ventricle in systole cross-sectional area measurements of at least about 75 horses of about the same age, sex, and weight as said racehorse candidate.
13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if it has a ventricular septal wall width and left ventricle in systole cross sectional area that is greater than the mean ventricular septal wall width and left ventricle in systole cross-sectional area measurement from said collection of measurements.
14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if it has a ventricular septal wall width and a left ventricle in systole cross sectional area measurement that is in the 75th percentile or higher when compared to the ventricular septal wall width and left ventricle in systole cross sectional area measurements from said collection of measurements.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, the method further comprising the steps of ultrasonographically measuring the cross-sectional area of the spleen of said unraced racehorse candidate;

wherein said collection of measurements further comprises ultrasonographically-obtained splenic cross-sectional area measurements of at least about 75 horses of about the same age, sex, and weight as said racehorse candidate.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if it has a ventricular septal wall width and splenic cross sectional area that is greater than the mean ventricular septal wall width and splenic cross-sectional area measurement from said collection of measurements.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if it has a ventricular septal wall width and a splenic cross sectional area measurement that is in the 75th percentile or higher when compared to the ventricular septal wall width and splenic cross sectional area measurements from said collection of measurements.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, the method further comprising the steps of obtaining a measurement of the height times weight of said unraced racehorse candidate;

wherein said collection of measurements further comprises height times weight measurements from at least about 75 horses of about the same age and sex as said racehorse candidate.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if both the ventricular septal wall width and the height times weight measurement are greater than the mean ventricular septal wall width and height X weight measurements from said collection of measurements.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of selecting said unraced racehorse candidate if it has both a ventricular septal wall width and a height times weight measurement that is in the 75th percentile or higher when compared to the ventricular septal wall width and height and weight measurements from said collection of measurements.

21. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, the method further comprising the steps of ultrasonographically measuring the cross-sectional area of the left ventricle in systole of said unraced racehorse candidate;
wherein said collection of measurements further comprises
ultrasonographically-obtained left ventricle in systole cross-sectional area measurements from at least about 75 horses of about the same age, sex, and weight as said racehorse candidate.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if it has a ventricular septal wall width, a left ventricle in systole cross sectional area, and a height times weight measurement that is greater than the mean ventricular septal wall width, left ventricle in systole cross sectional area, and height times weight measurements from said collection of measurements.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is selected if it has a ventricular septal wall width, a left ventricle in systole cross sectional area, and a height times weight measurement that is in the 75th percentile or higher when compared to corresponding measurements from said collection of measurements.

24-27. Canceled

28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said unraced racehorse candidate is a yearling or two year old.

29. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, the method further comprising the steps of:

(iv) ultrasonographically measuring one or more of the cross-sectional area of the left ventricle in systole, the cross-sectional area of the left ventricle in diastole, or the percent change in ventricular area per stroke of said unraced racehorse candidate;

(v) obtaining a measurement of the height times weight of said unraced racehorse candidate;

(vi) comparing said measurements from said unraced racehorse candidate to a collection of measurements from a group of horses, wherein said collection of measurements comprises height times weight measurements and one or more of ultrasonographically-obtained cross-sectional area of the left ventricle in systole measurements, cross-sectional area of the left ventricle in diastole measurements, or percent change in ventricular area per stroke measurements from at least about 75 horses of the same age, weight and sex as said racehorse candidate.

30 – 31. Canceled.

32. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, the method further comprising the step of:

(iv) echocardiographically imaging the heart of said racehorse utilizing an ultrasound machine;

(v) rating the image according to at least one cardiac parameter selected from the group consisting of the general shape of the heart at diastole and systole, the clarity and sharpness of contrast of left ventricle during diastole and systole, the smoothness of the left ventricle during diastole and systole, blood backflow from the left ventricle during diastole and systole, valve closure, and clarity of the image in diastole; and

(vi) comparing the rating to a collection of ratings of the same ultrasonographically-obtained cardiac parameter from a group of horses of about the same age, sex, and weight of said racehorse candidate.